AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (currently amended) A flame-retardant epoxy resin composition comprising an epoxy resin, a curing agent, [[and]] a metal hydroxide, and a silicone compound of a branched structure main chain having an aromatic-derived group,

wherein the curing agent is a phenolic resin (C) containing, in a molecular chain, a structural unit derived from a phenol (A) and a structural unit derived from an aromatic compound (B) other than the phenol (A).

2. (currently amended) A flame-retardant epoxy resin composition comprising an epoxy resin, a curing agent, [[and]] a metal hydroxide, and a silicone compound of a branched structure main chain having an aromatic-derived group,

wherein the epoxy resin is a novolac epoxy resin (D) obtained by glycidyletherifying a phenolic hydroxyl group of a phenolic resin (C) containing, in a molecular chain, a structural unit derived from a phenol (A) and a structural unit derived from an aromatic compound (B) other than the phenol (A).

3. (currently amended) A flame-retardant epoxy resin composition comprising an epoxy resin, a curing agent, [[and]] a

metal hydroxide, and a silicone compound of a branched structure main chain having an aromatic-derived group,

wherein the curing agent is a phenolic resin (C) containing, in a molecular chain, a structural unit derived from a phenol (A) and a structural unit derived from an aromatic compound (B) other than the phenol (A), and

the epoxy resin is a novolac epoxy resin (D) obtained by glycidyletherifying a phenolic hydroxyl group of a phenolic resin (C') containing, in a molecular chain, a structural unit derived from a phenol (A') and a structural unit derived from an aromatic compound (B') other than the phenol (A').

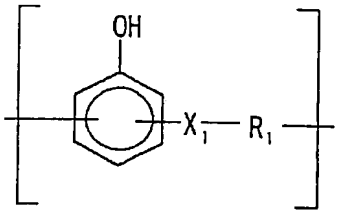
4. (original) A flame-retardant epoxy resin composition according to Claim 1, wherein the aromatic compound (B) is a compound selected from the group consisting of biphenyl and its derivatives, benzene and its derivatives, diphenyl ether and its derivatives, naphthalene and its derivatives, anthracene and its derivatives, fluorene and its derivatives, bisphenol fluorene and its derivatives, bisphenol S and its derivatives, bisphenol F and its derivatives and bisphenol A and its derivatives.

5. (original) A flame-retardant epoxy resin composition according to Claim 2, wherein the aromatic compound (B) is a compound selected from the group consisting of biphenyl and its derivatives, benzene and its derivatives, diphenyl ether and its derivatives, naphthalene and its derivatives, anthracene

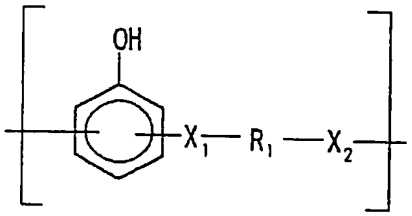
and its derivatives, fluorene and its derivatives, bisphenol fluorene and its derivatives, bisphenol S and its derivatives, bisphenol F and its derivatives and bisphenol A and its derivatives.

6. (original) A flame-retardant epoxy resin composition according to Claim 3, wherein the aromatic compound (B) is a compound selected from the group consisting of biphenyl and its derivatives, benzene and its derivatives, diphenyl ether and its derivatives, naphthalene and its derivatives, anthracene and its derivatives, fluorene and its derivatives, bisphenol fluorene and its derivatives, bisphenol S and its derivatives, bisphenol F and its derivatives and bisphenol A and its derivatives.

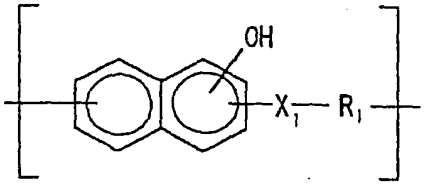
7. (original) A flame-retardant epoxy resin composition according to Claim 1, wherein the phenolic resin (C) has a recurring unit represented by either of the following formulas (I) to (IV):



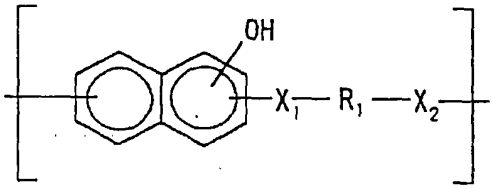
(I)



(II)



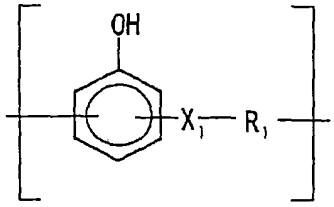
(III)



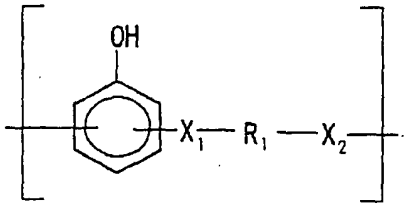
(IV)

(wherein X_1 and X_2 are each independently a C_{1-6} unsaturated chain structure linking group, or a C_{1-6} substituted or unsubstituted alkylene group; and R_1 is a phenylene group, a biphenylene group or a group derived from these groups).

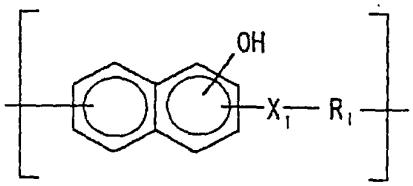
8. (original) A flame-retardant epoxy resin composition according to Claim 2, wherein the phenolic resin (C) has a recurring unit represented by either of the following formulas (I) to (IV):



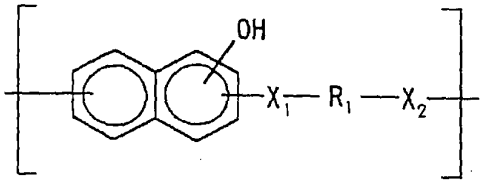
(I)



(II)



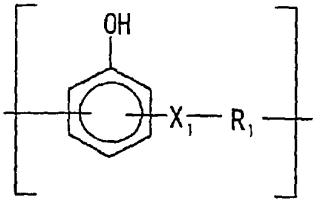
(III)



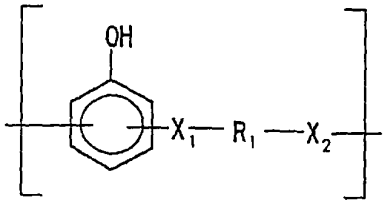
(IV)

(wherein X_1 and X_2 are each independently a C_{1-6} unsaturated chain structure linking group, or a C_{1-6} substituted or unsubstituted alkylene group; and R_1 is a phenylene group, a biphenylene group or a group derived from these groups).

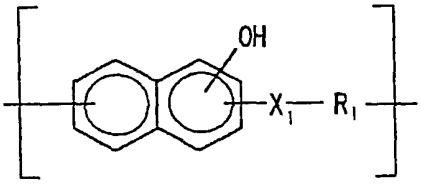
9. (original) A flame-retardant epoxy resin composition according to Claim 3, wherein the phenolic resin (C) has a recurring unit represented by either of the following formulas (I) to (IV):



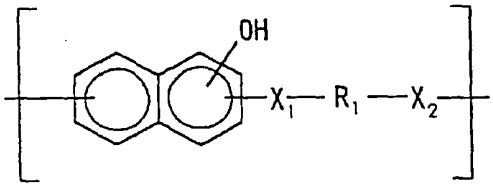
(I)



(II)



(III)



(IV)

(wherein X_1 and X_2 are each independently a C_{1-6} unsaturated chain structure linking group, or a C_{1-6} substituted or unsubstituted alkylene group; and R_1 is a phenylene group, a biphenylene group or a group derived from these groups).

10. (original) A flame-retardant epoxy resin composition according to Claim 1, wherein a content of the metal hydroxide is 10% by mass to 70% by mass relative to a total amount of the flame-retardant epoxy resin composition.

11. (original) A flame-retardant epoxy resin composition according to Claim 2, wherein a content of the metal hydroxide is 10% by mass to 70% by mass relative to a total amount of the flame-retardant epoxy resin composition.

12. (original) A flame-retardant epoxy resin composition according to Claim 3, wherein a content of the metal hydroxide is 10% by mass to 70% by mass relative to a total amount of the flame-retardant epoxy resin composition.

13-15. (cancelled)

16. (currently amended) A flame-retardant epoxy resin composition according to Claim [[13]] 1, wherein a content of the metal hydroxide is 5% by mass to 70% by mass relative to a total amount of the flame-retardant epoxy resin composition.

17. (currently amended) A flame-retardant epoxy resin composition according to Claim [[14]] 2, wherein a content of the metal hydroxide is [[10%]] 5% by mass to 70% by mass relative to a total amount of the flame-retardant epoxy resin composition.

18. (currently amended) A flame-retardant epoxy resin composition according to Claim [[15]] 3, wherein a content of the metal hydroxide is [[10%]] 5% by mass to 70% by mass relative to a total amount of the flame-retardant epoxy resin composition.

19. (currently amended) A flame-retardant epoxy resin composition according to Claim [[13]] 1, wherein the silicone compound contains [[an]] a unit (T unit) represented by the formula $RSiO_{1.5}$.

20. (currently amended) A flame-retardant epoxy resin composition according to Claim [[14]] 2, wherein the silicone compound contains [[an]] a unit (T unit) represented by the formula $RSiO_{1.5}$.

21. (currently amended) A flame-retardant epoxy resin composition according to Claim [[15]] 3, wherein the silicone

compound contains [[an]] a unit (T unit) represented by the formula $RSiO_{1.5}$.

22. (currently amended) A flame-retardant epoxy resin composition according to Claim [[13]] 1, wherein the silicone compound contains a group reactive with the epoxy resin and/or the curing agent.

23. (currently amended) A flame-retardant epoxy resin composition according to Claim [[14]] 2, wherein the silicone compound contains a group reactive with the epoxy resin and/or the curing agent.

24. (currently amended) A flame-retardant epoxy resin composition according to Claim [[15]] 3, wherein the silicone compound contains a group reactive with the epoxy resin and/or the curing agent.

25. (original) A flame-retardant epoxy resin composition according to Claim 22, wherein the reactive group is hydroxyl group, C_{1-5} alkoxy group, epoxy group or carboxyl group.

26. (original) A flame-retardant epoxy resin composition according to Claim 23, wherein the reactive group is hydroxyl group, C_{1-5} alkoxy group, epoxy group or carboxyl group.

27. (original) A flame-retardant epoxy resin composition according to Claim 24, wherein the reactive group is hydroxyl group, C_{1-5} alkoxy group, epoxy group or carboxyl group.

28. (currently amended) A flame-retardant epoxy resin composition according to Claim 1, ~~which is used for impregnation~~ impregnated and cured into a substrate ~~and subsequent curing for formation~~ of a laminate.

29. (currently amended) A flame-retardant epoxy resin composition according to Claim 2, ~~which is used for impregnation~~ impregnated and cured into a substrate ~~and subsequent curing for formation~~ of a laminate.

30. (currently amended) A flame-retardant epoxy resin composition according to Claim 3, ~~which is used for impregnation~~ impregnated and cured into a substrate ~~and subsequent curing for formation~~ of a laminate.

31. (original) A flame-retardant epoxy resin composition according to Claim 1, wherein the metal hydroxide is a metal oxide containing at least one element selected from the group consisting of aluminum, magnesium, zinc, boron, calcium, nickel, cobalt, tin, molybdenum, copper, iron and titanium.

32. (original) A flame-retardant epoxy resin composition according to Claim 2, wherein the metal hydroxide is a metal oxide containing at least one element selected from the group consisting of aluminum, magnesium, zinc, boron, calcium, nickel, cobalt, tin, molybdenum, copper, iron and titanium.

33. (original) A flame-retardant epoxy resin composition according to Claim 3, wherein the metal hydroxide is

a metal hydroxide containing at least one element selected from the group consisting of aluminum, magnesium, zinc, boron, calcium, nickel, cobalt, tin, molybdenum, copper, iron and titanium.

34. (original) A flame-retardant epoxy resin composition according to Claim 31, wherein the metal hydroxide is aluminum hydroxide, magnesium hydroxide or zinc borate.

35. (original) A flame-retardant epoxy resin composition according to Claim 32, wherein the metal hydroxide is aluminum hydroxide, magnesium hydroxide or zinc borate.

36. (original) A flame-retardant epoxy resin composition according to Claim 33, wherein the metal hydroxide is aluminum hydroxide, magnesium hydroxide or zinc borate.

37. (original) An epoxy resin varnish solution obtained by dispersing the flame-retardant epoxy resin composition set forth in Claim 1, in an organic solvent.

38. (original) An epoxy resin varnish solution obtained by dispersing the flame-retardant epoxy resin composition set forth in Claim 2, in an organic solvent.

39. (original) An epoxy resin varnish solution obtained by dispersing the flame-retardant epoxy resin composition set forth in Claim 3, in an organic solvent.

40. (original) A prepreg obtained by impregnating the flame-retardant epoxy resin composition set forth in Claim 1, into a substrate and curing the impregnated composition.

41. (original) A prepreg obtained by impregnating the flame-retardant epoxy resin composition set forth in Claim 2, into a substrate and curing the impregnated composition.

42. (original) A prepreg obtained by impregnating the flame-retardant epoxy resin composition set forth in Claim 3, into a substrate and curing the impregnated composition.

43. (currently amended) A laminate obtained by impregnating a flame-retardant epoxy resin composition comprising an epoxy resin, a curing agent, [[and]] a metal hydroxide, and a silicone compound of a branched structure main chain having an aromatic-derived group, into a substrate, curing the impregnated composition to obtain a prepreg, laminating a plurality of the prepregs, and hot-pressing them,

wherein the curing agent is a phenolic resin (C) containing, in a molecular chain, a structural unit derived from a phenol (A) and a structural unit derived from an aromatic compound (B) other than the phenol (A).

44. (currently amended) A laminate obtained by impregnating a flame-retardant epoxy resin composition comprising an epoxy resin, a curing agent, [[and]] a metal hydroxide, and a silicone compound of a branched structure main chain having an

aromatic-derived group, into a substrate, curing the impregnated composition to obtain a prepreg, laminating a plurality of the prepregs, and hot-pressing them,

wherein the epoxy resin is a novolac epoxy resin (D) obtained by glycidyletherifying a phenolic hydroxyl group of a phenolic resin (C) containing, in a molecular chain, a structural unit derived from a phenol (A) and a structural unit derived from an aromatic compound (B) other than the phenol (A).

45. (currently amended) A laminate obtained by impregnating a flame-retardant epoxy resin composition comprising an epoxy resin, a curing agent, [[and]] a metal hydroxide, and a silicone compound of a branched structure main chain having an aromatic-derived group, into a substrate, curing the impregnated composition to obtain a prepreg, laminating a plurality of the prepregs, and hot-pressing them,

wherein the curing agent is a phenolic resin (C) containing, in a molecular chain, a structural unit derived from a phenol (A) and a structural unit derived from an aromatic compound (B) other than the phenol (A), and

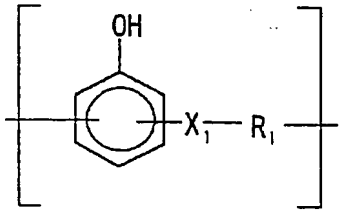
the epoxy resin is a novolac epoxy resin (D) obtained by glycidyletherifying a phenolic hydroxyl group of a phenolic resin (C') containing, in a molecular chain, a structural unit derived from a phenol (A') and a structural unit derived from an aromatic compound (B') other than the phenol (A').

46. (original) A laminate according to Claim 43, wherein the aromatic compound (B) is a compound selected from the group consisting of biphenyl and its derivatives, benzene and its derivatives, diphenyl ether and its derivatives, naphthalene and its derivatives, anthracene and its derivatives, fluorene and its derivatives, bisphenol fluorene and its derivatives, bisphenol S and its derivatives, bisphenol F and its derivatives and bisphenol A and its derivatives.

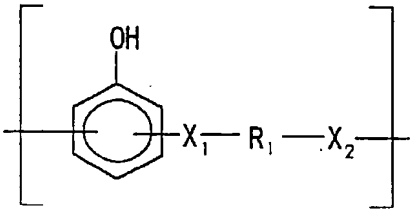
47. (original) A laminate according to Claim 44, wherein the aromatic compound (B) is a compound selected from the group consisting of biphenyl and its derivatives, benzene and its derivatives, diphenyl ether and its derivatives, naphthalene and its derivatives, anthracene and its derivatives, fluorene and its derivatives, bisphenol fluorene and its derivatives, bisphenol S and its derivatives, bisphenol F and its derivatives and bisphenol A and its derivatives.

48. (original) A laminate according to Claim 45, wherein the aromatic compound (B) is a compound selected from the group consisting of biphenyl and its derivatives, benzene and its derivatives, diphenyl ether and its derivatives, naphthalene and its derivatives, anthracene and its derivatives, fluorene and its derivatives, bisphenol fluorene and its derivatives, bisphenol S and its derivatives, bisphenol F and its derivatives and bisphenol A and its derivatives.

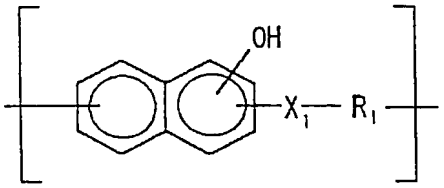
49. (original) A laminate according to Claim 43, wherein the phenolic resin (C) has a recurring unit represented by either of the following formulas (I) to (IV):



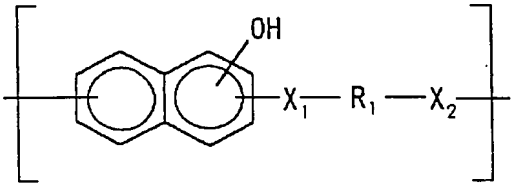
(I)



(II)



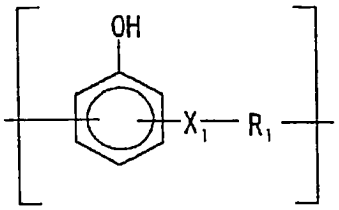
(III)



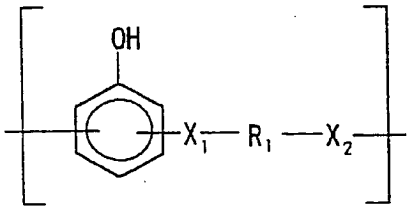
(IV)

(wherein X_1 and X_2 are each independently a C_{1-6} unsaturated chain structure linking group, or a C_{1-6} substituted or unsubstituted alkylene group; and R_1 is a phenylene group, a biphenylene group or a group derived from these groups).

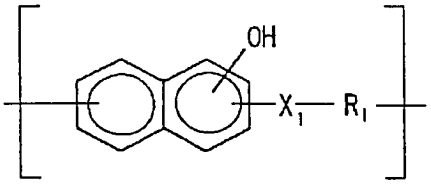
50. (original) A laminate according to Claim 44, wherein the phenolic resin (C) has a recurring unit represented by either of the following formulas (I) to (IV):



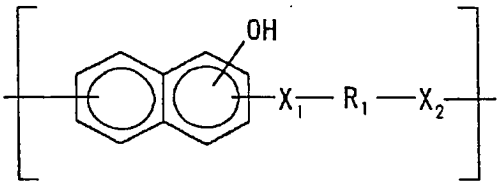
(I)



(II)



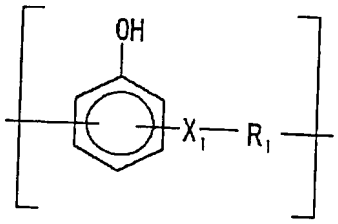
(III)



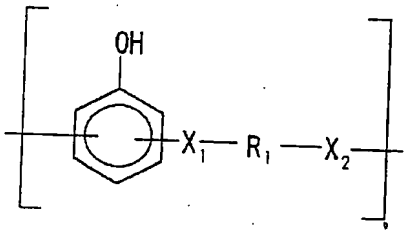
(IV)

(wherein X_1 and X_2 are each independently a C_{1-6} unsaturated chain structure linking group, or a C_{1-6} substituted or unsubstituted alkylene group; and R_1 is a phenylene group, a biphenylene group or a group derived from these groups).

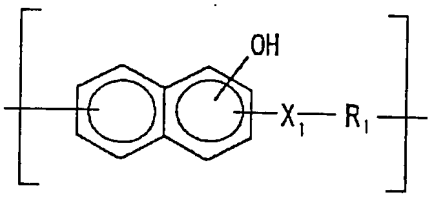
51. (original) A laminate according to Claim 45, wherein the phenolic resin (C) has a recurring unit represented by either of the following formulas (I) to (IV):



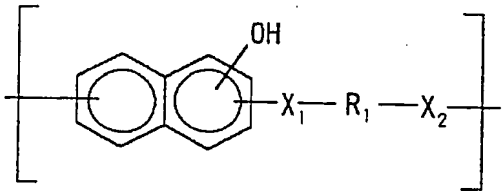
(I)



(II)



(III)



(IV)

(wherein X_1 and X_2 are each independently a C_{1-6} unsaturated chain structure linking group, or a C_{1-6} substituted or unsubstituted alkylene group; and R_1 is a phenylene group, a biphenylene group or a group derived from these groups).

52. (currently amended) ~~A laminate according to Claim 43~~ A laminate obtained by impregnating a flame-retardant epoxy resin composition comprising an epoxy resin, a curing agent and a metal hydroxide, into a substrate, curing the impregnated composition to obtain a prepreg, laminating a plurality of the prepregs, and hot-pressing them,

wherein the curing agent is a phenolic resin (C) containing, in a molecular chain, a structural unit derived from a phenol (A) and a structural unit derived from an aromatic compound (B) other than the phenol (A),

wherein a content of the metal hydroxide is 10% by mass to 70% by mass relative to a total amount of the flame-retardant epoxy resin composition.

53. (currently amended) ~~A laminate according to Claim 44~~ A laminate obtained by impregnating a flame-retardant epoxy resin composition comprising an epoxy resin, a curing agent and a metal hydroxide, into a substrate, curing the impregnated composition to obtain a prepreg, laminating a plurality of the prepregs, and hot-pressing them,

wherein the epoxy resin is a novolac epoxy resin (D) obtained by glycidyletherifying a phenolic hydroxyl group of a phenolic resin (C) containing, in a molecular chain, a structural unit derived from a phenol (A) and a structural unit derived from an aromatic compound (B) other than the phenol (A),

wherein a content of the metal hydroxide is 10% by mass to 70% by mass relative to a total amount of the flame-retardant epoxy resin composition.

54. (currently amended) ~~A laminate according to Claim 45~~ A laminate obtained by impregnating a flame-retardant epoxy resin composition comprising an epoxy resin, a curing agent and a metal hydroxide, into a substrate, curing the impregnated composition to obtain a prepreg, laminating a plurality of the prepregs, and hot-pressing them,

wherein the curing agent is a phenolic resin (C) containing, in a molecular chain, a structural unit derived from a phenol (A) and a structural unit derived from an aromatic compound (B) other than the phenol (A), and

the epoxy resin is a novolac epoxy resin (D) obtained by glycidyletherifying a phenolic hydroxyl group of a phenolic resin (C') containing, in a molecular chain, a structural unit derived from a phenol (A') and a structural unit derived from an aromatic compound (B') other than the phenol (A'),

wherein a content of the metal hydroxide is 10% by mass to 70% by mass relative to a total amount of the flame-retardant epoxy resin composition.

55-57. (cancelled)

58. (original) A laminate according to Claim 43, wherein a content of the metal hydroxide is 5% by mass to 70% by

mass relative to a total amount of the flame-retardant epoxy resin composition.

59. (original) A laminate according to Claim 44, wherein a content of the metal hydroxide is 5% by mass to 70% by mass relative to a total amount of the flame-retardant epoxy resin composition.

60. (original) A laminate according to Claim 45, wherein a content of the metal hydroxide is 5% by mass to 70% by mass relative to a total amount of the flame-retardant epoxy resin composition.

61. (original) A laminate according to Claim 43, wherein the silicone compound contains [[an]] a unit (T unit) represented by the formula $RSiO_{1.5}$.

62. (original) A laminate according to Claim 44, wherein the silicone compound contains [[an]] a unit (T unit) represented by the formula $RSiO_{1.5}$.

63. (original) A laminate according to Claim 45, wherein the silicone compound contains [[an]] a unit (T unit) represented by the formula $RSiO_{1.5}$.

64. (original) A laminate according to Claim 43, wherein the silicone compound contains a group reactive with the epoxy resin and/or the curing agent.

65. (original) A laminate according to Claim 44, wherein the silicone compound contains a group reactive with the epoxy resin and/or the curing agent.

66. (original) A laminate according to Claim 45, wherein the silicone compound contains a group reactive with the epoxy resin and/or the curing agent.

67. (currently amended) A laminate according to Claim [[43]] 64, wherein the reactive group is hydroxyl group, C_{1-5} alkoxy group, epoxy group or carboxyl group.

68. (currently amended) A laminate according to Claim [[44]] 65, wherein the reactive group is hydroxyl group, C_{1-5} alkoxy group, epoxy group or carboxyl group.

69. (currently amended) A laminate according to Claim [[45]] 66, wherein the reactive group is hydroxyl group, C_{1-5} alkoxy group, epoxy group or carboxyl group.

70. (original) A laminate according to Claim 43, wherein the metal hydroxide is a metal oxide containing at least one element selected from the group consisting of aluminum, magnesium, zinc, boron, calcium, nickel, cobalt, tin, molybdenum, copper, iron and titanium.

71. (original) A laminate according to Claim 44, wherein the metal hydroxide is a metal oxide containing at least one element selected from the group consisting of aluminum,

magnesium, zinc, boron, calcium, nickel, cobalt, tin, molybdenum, copper, iron and titanium.

72. (original) A laminate according to Claim 45, wherein the metal hydroxide is a metal oxide containing at least one element selected from the group consisting of aluminum, magnesium, zinc, boron, calcium, nickel, cobalt, tin, molybdenum, copper, iron and titanium.

73. (original) A laminate according to Claim 43, wherein the metal hydroxide is aluminum hydroxide, magnesium hydroxide or zinc borate.

74. (original) A laminate according to Claim 44, wherein the metal hydroxide is aluminum hydroxide, magnesium hydroxide or zinc borate.

75. (original) A laminate according to Claim 45, wherein the metal hydroxide is aluminum hydroxide, magnesium hydroxide or zinc borate.

76-78. (cancelled)

79. (new) A laminate obtained by impregnating a flame-retardant epoxy resin composition comprising an epoxy resin, a curing agent and a metal hydroxide, into a substrate, curing the impregnated composition to obtain a prepreg, laminating a plurality of the prepregs, and hot-pressing them,

wherein the curing agent is a phenolic resin (C) containing, in a molecular chain, a structural unit derived from

a phenol (A) and a structural unit derived from an aromatic compound (B) other than the phenol (A), which satisfies the following conditions (a) to (d):

(a) $45 \leq \sigma \leq 100$, $3 \leq E \leq 12$

[wherein σ is a bending strength (MPa) of the laminate at 230±10°C and E is a flexural modulus (GPa) of the laminate at 230±10°C],

(b) $30 \leq G \leq 60$

[wherein G is a proportion (mass %) of the substrate in a total amount of the laminate],

(c) $F \leq 45$ (mass %), F (mass %) = Rx100/X

(wherein R is an amount of a thermal decomposition product other than water, generating from a room temperature to 500°C, and X is a content of the resin in the laminate), and

(d) $4 \leq V \leq 13$

[wherein V is an amount (V mass %) of a water vapor generating from a room temperature to 500°C, relative to a total amount of the laminate, when the laminate is subjected to thermal decomposition at a temperature elevation rate of 10°C/min at an air flow rate of 0.2 liter/min].

80. (new) A laminate obtained by impregnating a flame-retardant epoxy resin composition comprising an epoxy resin, a curing agent and a metal hydroxide, into a substrate, curing the

impregnated composition to obtain a prepreg, laminating a plurality of the prepregs, and hot-pressing them,

wherein the epoxy resin is a novolac epoxy resin (D) obtained by glycidyletherifying a phenolic hydroxyl group of a phenolic resin (C) containing, in a molecular chain, a structural unit derived from a phenol (A) and a structural unit derived from an aromatic compound (B) other than the phenol (A), which satisfies the following conditions (a) to (d):

(a) $45 \leq \sigma \leq 100$, $3 \leq E \leq 12$

[wherein σ is a bending strength (MPa) of the laminate at 230±10°C and E is a flexural modulus (GPa) of the laminate at 230±10°C],

(b) $30 \leq G \leq 60$

[wherein G is a proportion (mass %) of the substrate in a total amount of the laminate],

(c) $F \leq 45$ (mass %), F (mass %) = Rx100/X

(wherein R is an amount of a thermal decomposition product other than water, generating from a room temperature to 500°C, and X is a content of the resin in the laminate), and

(d) $4 \leq V \leq 13$

[wherein V is an amount (V mass %) of a water vapor generating from a room temperature to 500°C, relative to a total amount of the laminate, when the laminate is subjected to thermal

decomposition at a temperature elevation rate of 10°C/min at an air flow rate of 0.2 liter/min].

81. (new) A laminate obtained by impregnating a flame-retardant epoxy resin composition comprising an epoxy resin, a curing agent and a metal hydroxide, into a substrate, curing the impregnated composition to obtain a prepreg, laminating a plurality of the prepregs, and hot-pressing them,

wherein the curing agent is a phenolic resin (C) containing, in a molecular chain, a structural unit derived from a phenol (A) and a structural unit derived from an aromatic compound (B) other than the phenol (A), and

the epoxy resin is a novolac epoxy resin (D) obtained by glycidyletherifying a phenolic hydroxyl group of a phenolic resin (C') containing, in a molecular chain, a structural unit derived from a phenol (A') and a structural unit derived from an aromatic compound (B') other than the phenol (A'), which satisfies the following conditions (a) to (d):

(a) $45 \leq \sigma \leq 100$, $3 \leq E \leq 12$

[wherein σ is a bending strength (MPa) of the laminate at 230±10°C and E is a flexural modulus (GPa) of the laminate at 230±10°C],

(b) $30 \leq G \leq 60$

[wherein G is a proportion (mass %) of the substrate in a total amount of the laminate],

(c) $F \leq 45$ (mass %), F (mass %) = Rx100/X

(wherein R is an amount of a thermal decomposition product other than water, generating from a room temperature to 500°C, and X is a content of the resin in the laminate), and

(d) $4 \leq V \leq 13$

[wherein V is an amount (V mass %) of a water vapor generating from a room temperature to 500°C, relative to a total amount of the laminate, when the laminate is subjected to thermal decomposition at a temperature elevation rate of 10°C/min at an air flow rate of 0.2 liter/min].